

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAPPOR 00075 030256Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 EUR-12 IO-13 ACDA-12 DLOS-09 /113 W

-----065775 031759Z /42

R 030234Z AUG 78

FM AMCONSUL SAPPORO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 547

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAPPORO 075

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: JA, DEF

SUBJECT: JSDF REACTION TO KURISU DISMISSAL

1. WE HAVE TALKED TO HIGH AND MIDDLE RANKING OFFICERS IN HOKKAIDO, INCLUDING THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE NORTHERN ARMY AND TWO FRONT LINE DIVISION COMMANDERS ABOUT LAST WEEK'S FORCED RESIGNATION OF GENERAL KURISU, CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPANESE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF. UNIFORMED OPINION IN HOKKAIDO SOLIDLY SUPPORTS GENERAL KURISU'S STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT FRONT LINE COMMANDERS MAY BE FORCED TO TAKE "EXTRA-LEGAL" ACTION TO DEAL WITH IMMINENT AGRESSION IF HIGHER AUTHORITY IS SLOW TO MAKE A DECISION. ALL AGREE THAT THE VAGUENESS IN COMMAND AUTHORITY IN EMERGENCIES IS A GLARING DEFICIENCY IN JAPAN'S DEFENSE PREPAREDNESS AND THAT GENERAL KURISU DID THE NATION A GREAT SERVICE IN SAYING SO.

2. ON A MORE EMOTIONAL LEVEL, JSDF OFFICERS HERE PROFESS FRANK ADMIRATION FOR THE COURAGE WITH WHICH GENERAL KURISU HAS SPOKEN OUT ON SENSITIVE ISSUES SINCE ASSUMING THE JCS CHAIRMANSHIP. "HE SPEAKS FOR US ALL," SAID ONE HIGH RANKING OFFICER. FAR FROM BEING DISCOURAGED BY HIS ABRUPT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAPPOR 00075 030256Z

DISMISSAL, JSDF OFFICERS HERE BELIEVE GENERAL KURISU'S STATEMENTS HAVE SHAKEN LOOSE THE TIMIDITY WITH WHICH TOP OFFICERS HAVE FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS ADDRESSED VITAL DEFENSE ISSUES. THEY HOPE THAT IN SACRIFICING HIS CAREER, KURISU HAS SUCCEEDED IN FINALLY PLACING PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF DEFENSE MATTERS ON A MORE "REALISTIC" PLANE.

3. WHILE SOME RESERVATION IS EXPRESSED OVER GENERAL KURISU' CHOICE OF WORDS, JSDF OFFICERS EMPHATICALLY DENY CHARGES THAT CIVILIAN CONTROL WAS ENDANGERED BY HIS OUTSPOKENNESS. THEY VIGOROUSLY ASSERT THAT THE KURISU CASE DIFFERS FROM THE MACARTHUR AND SINGLAUB CASES IN THAT KURISU NEVER OPPOSED ESTABLISHED POLICY OR DISOBEYED AN ORDER. IN FACT HE REPORTEDLY OFFERED TO RESIGN TWICE BEFORE WHEN THE PRESS CRITICIZED HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS AS INFRINGING ON POLICY MATTERS DECIDED BY CIVILIAN AUTHORITY. FURTHERMORE, JSDF OFFICERS HERE SAY, THE SITUATION TODAY CANNOT BE COMPARED IN ANY WAY WITH THAT OF PREWAR JAPAN. NOT ONLY ARE THE ARMED FORCES INCOMPARABLY SMALLER, BUT TODAY'S JSDF OFFICERS HAVE NO INTEREST IN BECOMING EMBROILED IN POLITICS.

4. JSDF OFFICERS GENERALLY AGREE THAT JAPAN IS UNDER NO IMMINENT THREAT FROM A FOREIGN POWER, BUT AS FRONT LINE OFFICERS NEAREST TO THE SOVIET UNION MANY HAVE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH SOVIET HARASSMENT OF JAPANESE VESSELS AT SEA AND REPEATED SOVIET FLIRTATIONS WITH JAPANESE AIRSPACE. THEY SAY THAT THEY HAVE BEEN FRUSTRATED BY THEIR INABILITY TO RESPOND TO THESE TYPES OF INSULTS AND ANNOYANCES. OF COURSE SOME PROBLEMS ARISE FROM INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT, BUT THEY SAY COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEMS HAVE ALSO BEEN SLOW TO REACT. THEIR BIGGEST WORRY IS THAT KURISU'S "SACRIFICE" WILL COME TO NAUGHT AND THAT A
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAPPOR 00075 030256Z

GENUINE PROBLEM WILL AGAIN BE SWEEPED UNDER THE RUG AS TOO POLITICALLY HOT TO HANDLE. WESTMORE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, MILITARY PLANS, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SAPPOR00075
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780318-0656
Format: TEL
From: SAPPORO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808102/aaaadhm.tel
Line Count: 96
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 000b0358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1546438
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JSDF REACTION TO KURISU DISMISSAL
TAGS: PINT, MARR, JA, (KURISU, HIROOMI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/000b0358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014